

Off the Beaten Track

Jeff: Simon! Madeline! Welcome! It's great to see you guys!

Madeline: Hi, Jeff. Thanks for inviting us. And sorry we're a bit late. Simon decided [REDACTED]

Simon: Well, a captain is only as good as his navigator.

Jeff: Uh-oh. Did I not give you decent directions? I know it's hard to find this place. It's a little bit [REDACTED]

Madeline: Your directions were perfect, Jeff. We just got a little [REDACTED] coming off the interstate, and of course [REDACTED] Simon here stops and asks for directions, even in the [REDACTED]

Simon: Yeah, but I told you I could [REDACTED] and find my way here.

Jeff: And here you both are. Well, come on in and [REDACTED] You can [REDACTED] and I'll whip up some of my famous guacamole and a drink or two. We can relax on the porch and catch up as the sun goes down.

Madeline: Ah, a fiesta in the country! I can't wait. I can feel myself [REDACTED] already.

Simon: I'll say. Now there's a way to end a long drive... (A bit later...)

Simon: Ah, what a great way to kick off our weekend in the country.

Madeline: Yeah, I've been looking forward to some R and R for a long time. I've really needed to [REDACTED]

Jeff: Well, I'm glad to be able to offer you a [REDACTED] for a break from the [REDACTED]. That's why I love being out here so much.

Simon: So, how is the big change working out for you? Have you felt much culture shock moving out to [REDACTED] like this?

Jeff: No, not at all... I grew up in the country, so in a way, this feels more like home to me than the city. In fact, sometimes I felt like [REDACTED] in the city. Of course, there are things I miss, but all in all I'm really happy to be out here [REDACTED]

Madeline: So, you're here full time now, then?

Jeff: Well, I still have a little place in the city, but this is where [REDACTED] for now.

Simon: And how's the writing coming along?

Jeff: It's great... now. At first I was really afraid that it wasn't going to [REDACTED] that I'd really made a terrible mistake leaving my job and moving here to write. I had a bad case of writer's block. But then I [REDACTED] it, and I've actually just finished my manuscript.

Madeline: Hey, congratulations! Let's have a toast to that!

Simon: Yeah, cheers!

Madeline: And what about the locals? Are you meeting nice people here?

Jeff: Oh, sure. When I bought the place, I didn't know anyone, of course. I think [REDACTED] too, because everyone knows everyone around here. People always seemed to be [REDACTED] but [REDACTED] at the same time.

Simon: And it must have been rough [REDACTED] when it came to a social life, too.

Jeff: Yeah, that was not easy. No one [REDACTED] to me, except to [REDACTED]

Madeline: So, how did you break the ice? If I know you, you put on a big smile and had new friends [REDACTED] in no time.

Jeff: Actually, I had a secret weapon.

Simon: A secret weapon? What's that?

Jeff: You're eating it.

Madeline: The guacamole?

Jeff: Hey, I told you it was famous. Around here, at least.

Simon: So, you just started handing complete strangers bowls of guacamole? Gee, you'd think that would [REDACTED]

Jeff: No, of course not. There was actually a good old-fashioned town picnic, so I brought as much of the stuff as I could make. As soon as people started tasting it, I had all sorts of welcomes and invitations to dinner!

Madeline: So it's true that the fastest way to someone's heart is through their stomach.

Simon: And speaking of which... when's dinner?

Jeff: Whenever we want. We're not [REDACTED] here.

Madeline: Great, because that sunset is gorgeous. I could sit here all weekend. No lights, no sirens, no honking horns... I could really get used to this.

Simon: Yup, this is the life!